

27 March 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Comments on New York Herald Tribune Article, "No Chance Seen of Reds to Match U. S. Meat, Milk"

1. The attached article has been reviewed, as you requested, and comments follow:

a. We agree that there is no possibility that the Soviets will achieve the Khrushchev meat goal within the next few years. However, his milk goal is much more reasonable, and we believe it is possible, though not probable, that it may be reached by about 1960, and the butter goal even earlier.

b. The Herald Tribune article states that the National Planning Association "does not take seriously" the Communist party leader's boasts. This is a partial and somewhat misleading quotation from NPA's conclusion, namely, that they did not take seriously

Khrushchev's boast to catch up with the United States in agriculture by the end of this decade. The NPA did not say the Soviets could not catch up, in fact, it pointed to various steps that the Soviets would have to take if they were to do so over a more extended period of time.

c. The NPA conclusion that "the collective farm system of forced production and regimentation has been a colossal failure" is very questionable. If the criteria for success is the maximizing of agricultural output, the conclusion is correct. But the primary purposes of collectivization were to give the State control over the food supply in order to permit urban workers to be fed and to drain off agricultural labor for industry. Judged from these criteria, which appear more relevant, collectivization helped achieve rapid industrialization.

2. The main thrust of the article, we believe, is unfortunate. We grant that the dates given by Khrushchev for achieving certain agricultural output goals are unrealistic. We grant that the

achievement of most goal in particular will require the application of substantial resources to agriculture, far above those now planned. However, since the death of Stalin, agriculture is no longer a Soviet stepchild. Since 1953, investments have increased sharply, prices paid to farmers have been raised, peasant incomes increased, and Communist dogma modified. These efforts have lead to considerable improvement. Overall agricultural output has been raised nearly one-third over the past four years, and the Russians are eating better now than they did under Stalin. Further, we believe there will be further improvement in agricultural output over the next few years, an improvement that will surely be hailed as a great triumph for Communism.

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Chief, Economic Research Area
Research and Reports

Enclosure: New York Herald Tribune
Article dated 17 March 1958

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